

REMARKS

Applicants thank Examiner Albert J. Gagliardi for the courtesies extended to Applicants' undersigned representative in a telephone discussion with Applicants' undersigned representative on April 24, 2006. In this telephone discussion, the Examiner requested that the claim amendments filed on October 21, 2003 in this reissue application be presented in a format that is standard for reissue applications.

Accordingly, Applicants hereby submit this Replacement Preliminary Amendment to replace the Preliminary Amendment originally filed in the above-identified reissue application on October 21, 2003. The amendments in this Replacement Preliminary Amendment are identical in substance to those originally filed in this reissue application on October 21, 2003, but the amendment format is changed to comply with standard reissue application practice as per the Examiner's request. Since the changes are identical in substance to those filed on October 21, 2003, Applicants respectfully submit that a new Supplemental Reissue Declaration does not appear to be required at this time.

The Examiner is thanked for his indication during the above-mentioned April 24, 2006 telephone discussion that this Replacement Preliminary Amendment would appear to place this reissue application in condition for allowance.

In light of this indication, Applicants concurrently file herewith a Submission of the Original Patent having attached thereto the original ribboned patent grant of U.S. Patent No. 6,469,307 in accordance with 37 C.F.R. § 1.178(a). An Offer to Surrender Patent for a Reissue Application, executed by the Assignee, was filed in this application on January 29, 2004. It is requested that the next Office Communication acknowledge receipt of the attached original patent.

The instant Replacement Preliminary Amendment is being filed to replace the Preliminary Amendment originally filed in the above-identified reissue application on October 21, 2003 so as to properly conform with certain procedural requirements regarding claim amendments that are particular to reissue application practice. For example, the claimed features to be omitted by reissue are now enclosed in brackets and the claims that are newly-added are underlined.

The status of the claims is as follows: claims 1-24 were patented in U.S. Patent No. 6,469,307 ("the '307 patent"), and claims 5, 10, 15 and 20 have been amended; and new claims 25-27 have been added by way of this amendment to further define the invention. Thus, claims 1-27 are presently pending. Basis for new claims 25-27 may be found throughout the specification of the '307 patent and the figures therein. Accordingly, no new matter has been introduced by the amendments. Applicants respectfully request consideration of the subject application in view of the above amendments and remarks. Applicants look forward to a favorable Office Action on the merits.

EXCEPT for issue fees payable under 37 C.F.R. §1.18, the Commissioner is hereby authorized by this paper to charge any additional fees during the entire pendency of this application including fees due under 37 C.F.R. §§1.16 and 1.17 which may be required,

including any required extension of time fees, or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No.

50-0573. This paragraph is intended to be a **CONSTRUCTIVE PETITION FOR**

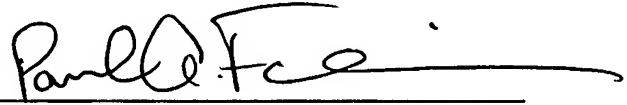
EXTENSION OF TIME in accordance with 37 C.F.R. §1.136(a)(3).

Respectfully submitted,

DRINKER BIDDLE & REATH LLP

Dated: May 2, 2006

By:



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